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The Infants-Advocate

Parts 1. & 2.

ag. Firmin & Whiston
by

J. Grantham

1688. 1690.

THE
Infants Advocate.

The Second Part.

AGAINST

Mr. Giles Firmin, and Mr. Joseph Whiston ;

Who hold,

That many dying Infants are damned.

In Answer to two Books, Intituled, *The Answer of Giles Firmin : And The Right Method for the proving of Infant-Baptism.*

By **THOMAS GRANTHAM,**

A Messenger of the Baptized Churches.

Gen. 49. 5. *Simeon and Levi are Brethren, the Instruments of Cruelty are in their Habitation.*

Mat. 23. 7, 8. *The Instruments of the Churill are Evil : He deviseth wicked Devices to destroy the Poor with lying Words : But the Liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.*

L O N D O N,

Printed by J. D. for the Author, 1690.

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The PREFACE.

Shewing briefly the dangerous and impious Doctrines of those of Calvin's Way; and the purity of the Doctrine of those called Arminians, concerning the sinful Acts of Men.

MR. Firmin labours to blind the Eyes of his Followers with Stories of me, that I am an Arminian Anabaptist, and that I deal proudly in the Arminian Point, &c.

Now though I desire to follow no Man but as he follows Christ; yet that all Men may have a right understanding of the Matter, I shall here briefly shew the difference between those called Presbyterians, and those called Arminians, with respect to the things wherein I agree with the latter.

1. *The Question is*, Whether God did decree that Man should Sin? *The Arminians hold*, That God did not decree that Man should Sin, but did absolutely forbid it. And that Sin is of the Devil, the effect of his Malice against Man, and Pride against God; and that Men commit Sin through his Temptations, and their own Perverseness, in departing from the Counsel of God.

But the Presbyterians do hold, That God did absolutely decree all the Actions of Men, even the most sinful of them. *Let us hear their own Words*, that out of their own Mouths they may be judged.

Mr. Calvin says, Man does effect nothing, but by the secret Direction and Motion of the Almighty; that he does that which is unlawful, *justo illius impulsu*, by the just impulse of God. *Instit. l. i. c. i.* Where also he thus makes God the Author of all those Sins which Men commit.

And Mr. Pierce (a very Learned Writer) in his *AUTOGRAPHOS*, *quotes the several Pages where Dr. Twisse, Piscator, Zanchy,*
Calvin.

Calvin, Triglandius, and others, do teach, That God doth make Men Transgressors, and is the Author of Adultery; and that Murther is the Work of God; and that Sinners do sin by the force of God's Will; and that God predestines Men to sin, and to sin *quatenus* Sin. That he is the Author of Evil, not only of Punishment, but of Sin too; that he is the Cause, not only of humane Actions, but of the very Defects and Privations; that he effecteth Sin, that he exciteth, and tempteth, and compelleth Men to sin. What moved them (*saieth he*) to print such loathsome Doctrine? And in his Epistle to the Reader, he shews the Places where Dr. Twisse, Mr. B. and others, do teach, That God is the Cause in particular of every Act, nay the natural Cause, and the sovereign Author of the Act of Sin; nay, that he Wills and Acts, not in the Act of Sin only, but in the Sin of the Act too, whose very Pravity and Deformity doth make way for God's Glory. And in p. 10. he shews where Mr. Whitfield does teach expressly, That God decreed the Sin of Adam, and so ordered the whole Business that he should certainly fall; that it was necessary that the first Man should sin: That the Gospel doth stir up evil Affections in the Hearts of wicked Men, and hardens Mens Hearts; and God intends it should do so, and sends it for this very purpose. That of sinful Actions, God is the Author and proper Cause; yea, that he doth will and work in the Sin of the Act.

I could fill many Pages with such things as these; which shews the abominable Principles which are lodged in the Minds of the Presbyterians, and from thence have come into the Books of the most Learned of that Way, and also of some Independents; and to my further sorrow have in effect lately been published, by an inconsiderate Fury of some that profess the Truth in the Case of Baptism: From whose perverse writing, in a Book entituled, A Confession of Faith; as also from the words of the Learned Calvinists before recited, it will follow, That God decreed, and by his Providence ordered, that Cain should kill his Brother Abel, and that Ruben should pollute his Father's Bed. Tea, Mr. Peirce doth shew, p. 105. that Zanchy, Piscator, and others, do teach in the very Pages cited by Mr. Barlee, that both the Reprobate and the Elect were preordained to Sin, as Sin; that God is the Author of Sin in general, and of Murder and Adultery in particular; yea, the cause of Incredulity, and that he does thrust Men on unto Wickedness. Whereupon I do seriously admonish all Men to beware of all such as bring this impious Doctrine, let their Pretence be never so specious or fair, for they that can believe these things of God,

can never think that he loves the Men he decreed to be so vile, that he might glorify himself in their Damnation (as they also teach); and then it will be impossible for those Teachers to love their fellow Creatures, but rather their Hearts will burn with a furious Madness against them, and they will (and doubtless do) inwardly wish their Destruction; for how is it possible for these Men to be better than they take God himself to be?

But on the contrary, it is rational to conceive, that those who do in their Heart believe, that Almighty God does unfeignedly love and pity the whole race of Mankind, and accordingly does afford a sufficiency of Grace to them all, at one time or other, by which they may be saved; these I say, who thus believe, cannot but from this Principle love and pity all Men, and count them precious, 1 Pet. 2. 17. or else they sin against this most noble Christian Principle.

2. Mr. F. would possess his Readers, that the Arminians and my self are Pelagians; that we hold that Men have Power to save themselves, &c. What Pelagius held herein I know not, his Works being hard to come by, I have not seen them: but for my self I will truly declare my Judgment and Conscience in this Point in the words of the Arminians, p. 119. of their Confession. There is indeed [a Calling] sufficient, but yet withal ineffectual, to wit, which on Mans part is without any saving Effect, and through the alone voluntary and vincible or voidable fault of Man, becomes unfruitful, or obtains not its wished due Event and End.

But that [Vocation] which is accompanied with its saving Effect, or is already in its exercit Act, is sometimes called in Scripture, Conversion, Regeneration, a Spiritual raising from the dead, and a new Creation——being reformed according to the similitude or likeness both of the Doctrine and of the Life of Christ, we are as it were begotten again, and so by Repentance and Faith, are in him made new Creatures. Man therefore hath not saving Faith of or from himself; nor is he born again, or converted by the Power of his own Free-will, seeing in the State of Sin, he cannot so much as think, much less do any good, which is indeed savingly good (such is in special manner Conversion and saving Faith) of or from himself; but it is necessary that he be regenerated and wholly renewed of God in Christ, by the word of the Gospel, and by the virtue of the holy Spirit in Conjunction therewith: to wit, in Understanding, Affections, Will, and all his Powers and Faculties, that he may be able rightly to understand, meditate on, will and perform these things that are savingly

savingly good — In so much that Faith, Conversion, and all good Works, and all pious saving Actions which any one can think of, are wholly to be ascribed to the Grace of God in Christ as their principal and primary Cause. *Now thus far I do hold with those called Arminians.*

Now let us hear what Mr. F. and those of his way talk of this matter. Mr. F. *Script. War.* p. 53. very boldly tells us, he will say as profound Bradwardin, *illum nolo*, &c. I will not have him for my God who cannot most omnipotently make me both to will, and do what he will. *As if the Question were of what God can do? when it is only of what he doth: or, as if God were bound to save him by force, or he will not have him for his God.* Of the same Spirit is Dr. Twisse, who took his Rules from the same Bradwardin. It is impossible (*said he*) for a Reprobate to live godly, or for an Elect always to live lewdly; it is impossible for the Reprobates to shun Damnation; and its impossible for the Elect to disobey, when God will have them to be indolent. *Sure these are great swelling words of Vanity.*

And seeing Mr. Firmin has so much despised me, even as much as Goliath despised David (and not only my self, but the whole Party to whom I am related) because of my low Condition in the World; and yet through God's Blessing I have for the most part served my Brethren in the Gospel without being chargeable to them, (yea my Hands have often administred to the Necessities of some of them, for which all Glory be given to God.) Let him know that I am ready (if the Lord will) to engage him or any of his Party in this Controversy, tho my Education and Accomplishments be far short of his. But my Strength is in the Name of the Lord, and in his Word do I trust, and shall not fear what Man can do unto me.

The Particulars which I will (by the Grace of God) maintain, are these.

1. That God did not decree any of the sinful Actions of Men, but hath by his holy Word forbidden them.
2. That no dying Infants shall perish in Hellish Torments.
3. That the Baptized Churches (whom he scornfully calls Anabaptists) are the only truly constituted Churches in the World.

THO. GRANTHAM.

(1)

The Infants Advocate

The Second Part.



Against Mr. Giles Firmin, and Mr. Joseph Whiston :

Who hold,

That many dying Infants are damned;

Against Scripture, and against Reason.

CHAP. I.

TO begin with Mr. Firmin : He tells us, in his Preface, *That the Covenant, (Gen. 17. 7.) holds still with Believers and their Seed—unless the Anabaptists can shew us where God hath expressly repealed that Covenant.* And he quotes Gal. 3. 29. as if the Covenant, Gen. 17. 7. and the Promise, Gal. 3. 29. were the same; which is a very great Mistake.

Because the Covenant, Gen. 17. was made with the Seed of Abraham according to the Flesh, (and the Text, Gal. 3. 29. speaks only of the Seed of Abraham according to the Spirit) hence it is said, Gen. 17. 13. *My Covenant shall be in your Flesh :* and, Vers. 10. the Covenant is described by God himself in these words, *This is my Covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy Seed after thee ; Every Man-child among you shall be circumcised.* But the Text, Gal. 3. 29. is quite another thing, as will appear by reading it ; *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise.* Which Seed, according to THE PROMISE, is described and distinguished from the Seed of Abraham according to THE FLESH : In the same place, in these words, Vers. 26, 27, 28.

Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither Bond nor Free, there is neither Male nor Female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Which undeniably shews, that these Covenants, *Gen. 17.* and *Gal. 3.* were not the same; for in the one there is the greatest distinction that ever was between Jew and Gentile; the Jew being bound to be Circumcised, but the Gentile not bound to be Circumcised; they might be (and were) accepted (fearing God) without it. Here Bond-men in *Abraham's* House must be Circumcised, else not in this Covenant, *Gen. 17.* But the Gentiles might be (and many of them were) in the Covenant of Grace, though not Circumcised, else we must damn all the Gentiles by wholesale which were not Circumcised, and all their dying Infants throughout the World. Here is likewise a distinction between *Male* and *Female*, the one must needs be Circumcised, the other not. And therefore what could *Mr. F.* have brought more fully to confute his Opinion, viz. *That the Covenant, Gen. 17. 7. and that Gal. 3. 29. are the same*, when both the Covenants, and the Qualifications of the Persons in these Covenants (as covenanted Persons) are so evidently distinguished? But here I shall refer the Reader to my last and most Friendly Debate, where this Argument is more fully handled.

But now *Mr. F.* as blindly as boldly, tells the World this Story, *My Father being a Son,* (saith he) *and my Mother a Daughter of Abraham;* *This Covenant* (meaning that mentioned *Gen. 17.*) *ran down to his Seed.* And yet it's certain, neither his Father nor Mother were born of *Abraham's* Seed according to the Flesh, nor Circumcised, and yet God testifies that was the Covenant, and that was the Seed there meant. And those whom *Mr. F.* uncivilly calls *Anabaptists*, can easily prove, that the Covenant of Circumcision is expressly repealed; and therefore unless *Mr. F.* can shew that God made two Covenants with *Abraham* in *Gen. 17.* (which I think no Man in his Wits will undertake) he has quite lost himself, and his Father and Mother too. And that the Covenant of Circumcision is repealed, see *Acts 21. 21, 25.* compared with *Gal. 5. 1, 2, 3.*

What therefore *Mr. Firmin* would build upon this Presumption, *That his Father was a Son, and his Mother a Daughter of Abraham*, according to the Covenant *Gen. 17.* will come to nought; for though perhaps his Father and Mother were good People, yet perhaps they might be otherwise, or at least very erroneous in Matters
of

of Religion, as well as himself; yea, they might be ignorant of the Covenant made with *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, for any thing he infallibly knows: How then does the Covenant, *Gal. 3. 29.* run down to him from them? Certainly these are such Uncertainties, as no wise Man will build upon them. And yet *Mr. F.* tells us, *Here he had a price in his hand.* But I had rather believe *St. Paul* than *Mr. F.* for though he could plead himself a Son of *Abraham* (much better than *Mr. F.*) according to *Gen. 17.* being an *Hebrew of the Hebrews, and Circumcised the eighth Day*: Yet all these things he does not count a Price in his hand, but counts them *Loss and Dung for Christ*, *Phil. 3. 4, 5.* And yet his Father and Mother might be as much the Children of God as *Mr. Firmin's*: Why then does *Mr. F.* prefer himself to *St. Paul* because of his *Father and Mother*? Who would think that a wise Man should thus delude himself with Fancies? Let him consider *Phil. 3. 4* to *10.*

But we have more Fancies yet: For by virtue of his Father and Mother, he will claim a right to many Promises in Scripture, as that in *Exod. 20. 6.* But what if his Father, &c. did not keep God's Commandments? As I am sure they did not, when they did Sprinkle and Cross their *Giles Firmin's*; but they profaned the Name of the Lord, doing that in his Name which he required not at their Hands; and they did not only leave undone to themselves, what God commanded in the case of Baptism of Repentance, but laid an *ill Foundation* for their Son *Giles*, to be perversly obstinate against God in that part of his Will to this Day.

But let us see his next Scripture, *Deut. 30. 6.* Now, how will he prove that his Father's Heart, or his own, either was Circumcised in Infancy, *to love the Lord with all the Heart*, as the Text hath it? He can never prove this, and God knows his Heart is hardened against some part of God's Will, and therein he loves not God to this Day.

His next Quotation is *Psal. 112. 2.* *His Seed shall be mighty upon Earth; the Generation of the Upright shall be blessed.* How mighty *Mr. F.* is, is very well known, yet there are as mighty as he that differ from him about the meaning of *Gen. 17.* And why must this Text be meant of Infants? I have not read of mighty Infants: And are there no Blessings for the poor Infants of such as are not upright? And, poor Man! how wilt thou prove thy Father and Mother upright in the case of Infant-Sprinkling? Was not their Fear towards God therein, and thine too, taught by the Precepts of Men? and

and then it was but vain Worship; and what mighty things that Worship will produce, time will show.

His next is *Prov. 20. 7. The just Man walketh in his Integrity; his Children are blessed after him.* But a just Man, walks in all the *Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless*, Luke 1. 6. But thus did not Mr. *Firmin's Father and Mother*, when they got him sprinkled and crossed in Infancy. And did not God bless the Children of those who were not upright, whose Carcasses fell in the Wilderness? Yea, he brought their Children into the Land of Promise: And why may not the same Gracious God bless, and save too, even the Infants of ill Men, as well as the Infants of good Men, if they die in their Infancy? Who can bring a Charge against either, seeing God hath said, *The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father; but the Soul that sinneth it shall die*? All Souls are his, as the Soul of the Father, so the Soul of the Son; and he hath Mercy as well as Justice for them all.

Mr. *Firmin's* last Text is, *Isa. 43. 3. I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy Ransom, Ethiopia and Sheba for thee.* Now as this Text proves nothing for Mr. *Firmin* in his Infancy, though sprinkled, more than for my Children who were not baptized till they believed; so neither does it prove, that God had no Mercy for the dying Infants of these Nations. For though God justly punished the Wickedness of these Nations, yet he could not be unmerciful to the Innocent Babes, so far at least as not to cast them into Hell with their wicked Parents, because he has solemnly promised the contrary, *Ezek. 18. 3, 4, 20.* Yea, he hath confirmed this Promise with an Oath; and yet our perverse *Presbyterians* will use this Proverb, *The Fathers have eaten sour Grapes, and the Childrens (yea, the Infants) Teeth are set on edge.* And seeing the Lamb of God hath taken away the Sin of the World, which came by the Teeth of Adam, the infirmity of their Nature (which they could no way avoid) shall not cast them into Hell; for Christ came to seek and to save those which were lost, and could not help it.

Thus I have briefly considered Mr. *Firmin's* Scriptures, which I grant were not written to fill up Paper (as Mr. F. speaks;) and I add, neither were they written to make Men proud of their Fathers and Mothers, so as to despise others as not concern'd in the Blessings of the Covenant of God's Grace, because they had not such Fathers and Mothers as Mr. *Firmin* had. But to make an end of his Childish

Talk.

Talk about his Father and Mother; it will be impossible for him to prove them to be People of God, if we hold him to his own Rules which he gives to others in that case. For in *Pag.* 34. of *his Plea*, he shews how a People may be said to be God's People, and God their God. 1. *When they acknowledg God to be the only true God, and their God.* 2. *When they worship him with his own Worship only.* 3. *When they profess his Truths, Doctrines and Words for their Rule.* 4. *When they do covenant and engage themselves.*

Surely these Rules being closely observed as necessary to the true Claim to be God's People, they will exclude both Mr. F. and his Father and Mother, whether we consider their Infancy, in which they knew nothing of those Rules, and so could not observe them; or their State since they came to Years, their Worship being *not God's Worship only*; nor did they ever engage themselves in the Order prescribed in God's Word, to wit, by the Baptism of Repentance for Remission of Sins; and other ways without this, I know none for any Person to enter into Covenant with God in a Church-way, appointed of God, nor can Mr. Firmin shew any such thing. In *Pag.* 2. Mr. F. having set down the Scriptures before mentioned, then is pleased to tell us, *He believed, he highly prized, he begg'd the fulfilling of them many Years, being willing to have Abraham's God to be his God, and he willing to be his, as Abraham and my Father were (saith he.) And since he had promised Blessings several times, but did not specify what Blessings, I chose (saith he) my Blessings, all spiritual Blessings in Christ Jesus.* Surely Mr. F. cannot now deny but Men have some freedom of Will through God's Mercy: For if Mr. F. might, and did do all these things, and finally chose what Blessings he thought good, why may not other Men do so too as well as he? I never knew any of those, who are maliciously call'd Free-willers by our late peevish Calvinists, write more about the Liberty of Mans Will in so few words than he has done here, nor was he wholly passive in his Conversion, as he is sometimes pleased to dictate, but if this Story be true, he was very active, and that for many Years. But now he will shamefully contradict himself, for he presently tells us thus:

I was troubled several Tears about Legal Preparations, and Qualifications of Promises, which I do not wonder, tho Mr. Grantham and his Sect are never troubled about, being active not passive in their own begetting. See how Prejudice blinds the Man! He must needs be active who for many Tears before he chose, begg'd, believ'd, and
highly

highly prized the fulfilling of Promises, and then chose, *both what God he would, being willing to have Abraham's God for his God: And he chose too what Blessings he would, even all Spiritual Blessings in Christ Jesus.* But this is not true, for he does yet reject the Counsel of God with *his fore-Fathers the Pharisees*, Luke 7. 29.

O unwise Man! that thou mayst abuse *Tho. Grantham*, thou wilt be only passive in thy Conversion, and yet to dance round again, tells us within a few Lines in Answer to this Question, *Would I take him for my God, and give my self up to him? This* (saith he) *I found my Heart willing to do.* Sure this Man was not wholly passive; but truly I think Pride and Folly hath blinded him that he knows not what he writes.

And now he falls to boasting of his *Parents dedicating him in Baptism, and of his Baptismal Covenant*; and yet he never made such Covenant, and it's to be feared he never will. So when he has struggled about his *Father and Mother*, and the great things they did for him when they cross'd and sprinkled him; He only brings forth Wind, and feeds himself with the East-wind, yea he *feedeth on Ashes* (even Mens Inventions) *a deceived Heart hath turned him aside, so that he cannot deliver his Soul, nor beware of this lying Tradition* of Pædo-rantism which he holds in his *Right-hand*, and on his *Fore-head*.

And now this pretended Covenanter with God, comes boldly to break the Law of God in another case (*thus did not Abraham*) he will have his *Blood Pudding*, tho God hath said thou shalt not eat Blood, but commands all believing Gentiles as well as Jews to abstain from Blood, *Act. 15.* where the best of General Councils, directed by the Holy Ghost, decrees Blood-eating unlawful, and yet they understood *Levit. 17. 10.* better than *Mr. Firmin*, who now, with his *secundum artem*, thinks to do me a *Disgrace*, and himself a Kindness; and seeing he makes himself Sport, to make the Mirth more useful to him, hearken to this Ditty, as a fit Comment for his presumptuous Speech, *viz. I will eat a blood Pudding if it be prepared secundum artem.*

*Lo Doctor Firmin, mounted upon high,
As if (poor Soul) he were a Deity:
So wills he, and so acts he, his vain pleasure
Directs Blooding-eating as its proper measure,*

Tho

*Tho God forbids; for Blood he goes a gooding,
If Art be in't, he fears not God a Pudding.*

But Reader, be pleased to know that here Dr. *Firmin* has set his Will against the Will of God, which before the Law was forbidden, *Gen. 9.* And again forbidden in the Law, *Levit. 17.* And again it was forbidden in the Gospel. And what then is Mr. *F.* that he should thus set himself against Heaven's Authority? Yea he despises better Antiquity next to the holy Scripture, than any he can bring for Infant-sprinkling, which shews the great Partiality of the Man, seeing he cannot be ignorant of these things, being a Man of reading, and yet will pretend to see both *Scripture* and *Antiquity* for Infant-Baptism, which yet could never be found by any Man that had his Eyes open, many of his own Perswasion confessing, *there is no Scripture for Infant-Baptism, nor any just Evidence of it for about two hundred Years after Christ.*

Some do weakly object that saying of Christ, *That which goes into the Man defiles not;* which we readily grant, and therefore do acknowledge, that neither Blood nor Meats offered to Idols can defile us, but it is the eating these things against God's Prohibition that defiles Men. The Fruit which *Adam* did eat did not defile him, for that which goes into the Man defiles not; but his eating it when God had forbidden it, that was Sin, and Sin defiled him, and Sin will defile his Posterity. Hence we find that the Faithful made Conscience of abstaining from Blood in the early times of the Gospel. *Enseb. l. 5. c. 1.* tells us of one *Biblias*, a Christian Woman, having that Slander objected against her, *that the Christians did eat and devour Infants*, she replied, *how could that be, when we are not suffered to eat the Blood of Brute Beasts?* And *Tertullian* made the same Defence against the same Slander, and bids his Adversaries *let their Error blush.* See Dr. *Du-Veil* on *Acts 15.* p. 39.

In *Pag. 3.* Mr. *F.* would excuse certain Untruths which he published in his last, by saying they came from my own Party; but assigning no Person by Name, they remain his own: but he adds new Stories, That some body should tell some body (for he names no body) *that they would set a Taylor to dispute with Mr. F.* And then he very maliciously infers, *I see this Taylor is a great Man in the Anabaptists Conceit, and his own too, else he would not have carried himself so proudly in the Arminian Point, &c. upon this ground,*
faith

faith he, finding him a Scoffer, and one I understand that denies Communion with all Churches but dipp'd Churches, I did not treat him with that Respect which I have done other Men. And indeed his great business is to load me with Reproaches and Contempt, which I shall bear with rejoycing.

As for his Story here it may be as true as the former, yet if any were so imprudent, I am sorry; however as to his Disdain, because in my Youth I used the Employment of my Father, who was both a Farmer and a Taylor (tho my Employ for many Years to get my Bread, has been by farming) I shall only bequeath him these few Lines.

*Mechanick Disputants! 'gainst these you grutch:
But was not Paul, yea and our Saviour such?
The one made Tents; and Holy Writ does call
Him Carpenter, who was the Lord of all.
And whilst Mechanicks follow these they fear not
Your Learned Shifts, for to dispute, you dare not.
Nor shall I heed the Flouts of Doctor Firmin,
Whose Physick stinks, because 'tis mix'd with Vermin.*

For the *Arminian Point*, surely I have not carried my self proudly therein, nor does Mr. F. shew me in what Passage I have done so. I have read little of *Arminius* (nor am I of his Mind in some things, especially if he deny Imputative Righteousness, as some do object against him) he is not my Doctor, tho perhaps he was in some things as deserving as Mr. F. But with what truth can he say, he gave me no occasion to meddle with that Point, when he does so continually limit the Grace of God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, according to the Tenour of the Covenant of Circumcision? *Gen. 17.* These are his words. *Script. Warrant*, p. 20. I tell you — God was pleased to make a Covenant with Abraham, and with none other but Abraham, that he would be his God, and the God of his Seed, and sealed this Covenant; by which Covenant and Seal God did separate and divide all Abraham's Seed from the World. Thus he makes God the God of Abraham and his Seed only, not of *Melchisedec*, nor any other.

Now, Sir, either you do hold that this Covenant, *Gen. 17.* was the Covenant of Grace, and none but it, or else you hold that others were under the Covenant of Grace, who were not under this Covenant, *Gen. 17.* and might be saved as well as Abraham and his Seed,

tho

tho not concern'd in that Covenant and Seal mentioned *Gen. 17.* If you hold the latter, then we are agreed; but if you hold the former, then you damn all the World, old and young, who were not under the Covenant made with *Abraham, Gen. 17.* and sealed with Circumcision, which is so bloody a Doctrine, as will make your Heart ache when you rightly ponder your Consequence. By this that hath been said you may perceive there is a necessity to hold, without doubting, that the Covenant of Grace was not taken from all the World, and limited to *Abraham* and his Seed, but that gracious Covenant still was continued to all Mankind, as much as before the Covenant of Circumcision was made. But yet this is a great Truth, that no Covenant was made and confirmed till now, that Christ should be born of the Seed of *Abraham* rather than of any other righteous Man, and this together with, a numerous Posterity, and a Land flowing with Milk and Honey, were indeed the peculiar Covenant-Blessings confirmed to *Abraham and his Seed*, inasmuch that *thus* he was the God of *Abraham and his Seed only.* But to infer from hence, that now there was no Mercy or Salvation for any that were not in this Covenant made with *Abraham, Gen. 17.* is so silly a kind of Argumentation, that it is to be condemned, it has so odious a Reflection upon a gracious God, whose tender Mercies are over all his Works; and who was never any Respector of Persons, but always, and in every Nation, such as feared God and wrought Righteousness were accepted with him, according to the means of Grace which he gave them.

In short, I will (God assisting) abide by this, That a Covenant of Grace was made with whole *Adam, Gen. 3. 15.* that this Covenant was not lessened at all by the Covenant made with *Abraham*; that none shall lose the benefit of the Covenant of Grace, but those who sin themselves out of it by loving Darkness rather than Light. And here let Mr. F. oppose if he pleases.

CHAP. II.

IN *Pag. 5.* Mr. *Firmin* seems much displeased that I represent him as being of Opinion, that if *Isaac had died before he was eight days old, he had not been saved.* This he calls an abominable Falseness, and says he never thought so. Well, I am glad of that; but

let us see whether his words will clear him, for I would not wrong him for all the World, tho I may mistake him unwillingly.

In Pag. 6. of my *Infants Advocate*, I say, Mr. *Firmin* counts it an Error in me, for supposing if *Isaac* had died before he was eight days old, he had been saved. So (saith he) this Covenant might have been spared. The same (saith he) I may say of Baptism, this is the HAND OF THE SPIRIT, to convey Spiritual Blessings to the Hearts of some Infants — And he further saith, that he cannot conceive how it can consist with the Wisdom, Holiness and Goodness of God, to institute an Ordinance in his Church for Spiritual and SAVING Ends, and STRICTLY command this Ordinance to be administred to such Subjects as Children of eight days old, and he not work with his own Institution when and where he pleases; this Subject having NEED of the Spiritual Good signified and sealed thereby, it doth implicitly charge the Institution with Vanity.

In answer to all which, I say, either Mr. F. did count it an Error in me to hold, that *Isaac* and other Infants dying without Circumcision might be saved, and so Circumcision not necessary to the Salvation of Infants, or he did not. If not, then there is no difference, why then did he so reflect upon me, and not upon me only, but upon the Wisdom, Holiness and Goodness of God, merely because I do suppose, or teach, that Circumcision might in this respect have been spared. And what means his Demand? Dost the most High make vain Covenants? Does he not here suppose Circumcision was in vain, if Infants Salvation were as sure without it as with it? Now I never said the Covenant of Circumcision was in vain; I know, and did shew, that it was ordained for very great Ends; but I deny that God ordained it as needful for the Salvation of Infants, and I also shewed that many both Adult Persons and Infants (even all dying Infants) were saved without Circumcision, and I instanced in divers of the Patriarchs, who lived after Circumcision was instituted, yet they were not obliged, nor their Infants, to be circumcised.

Now for this Doctrine Mr. *Firmin* clamours against me, as making the Covenant of Circumcision to be a vain Covenant: And what can such Clamours signify against me, unless he make Circumcision necessary to the Salvation of Infants? I profess I can make no other Sense of his Outcries against me in this case. For he calls Circumcision THE HAND of the Spirit for saving Ends to some Infants. If then *Isaac*, or any other Infants, were saved without Circumcision, the Spirit saved them without the Hand of the Spirit, which is
strange;

strange; nay, he does not know how God can be *either wise, holy or good*, if he do not save Infants by *this Hand* from the time it was instituted; for, he makes the Command of Infant-Circumcision *so strict*, and the *Need of Infants so great*, of the things signified and sealed by Circumcision, that to hold they are saved as well without it, as with it, *it does implicitly charge the Institution with Vanity.*

Now I do profess to believe that our gracious God never ordained Circumcision to be necessary to the Salvation of any Infants, nor do I believe it was the *Hand of the Spirit to save Infants*, but it was ordained to keep the Seed of *Abraham* distinct from other Nations, as the Seed from whom Christ should proceed, as God had promised to *Abraham*, *Gen. 12.* and to be a *Monitor* to the Children of *Israel*, to keep themselves pure from Defilements, and in that it was administered to Infants, it pleased God so to order it, for the admission of them to other Rites in the Jewish Church, and for that it was more easy to be born in Infancy, than when grown to Maturity, but not to be the *Hand of the Spirit to save Infants*, as Mr. F. unwarily teaches.

Again, *Pag. 73.* of his *Script. Warrant*, Because we hold that whilst Infants are incapable to know Good or Evil, and dying in that State, they are all saved; Mr. F. cries out deridingly, *O happy Children who die in such a State! But hold a little, are they all justified and saved? then it must be by the Covenant of Grace: and shall they be under the Covenant SO, as to be in a justified and saved State by it, and not have the Seal of the Covenant?* To this I answer: First, It is certain that Infants of seven days old were as savingly under the Covenant of Grace as Infants of eight days, and Female Infants also in the time of the Law, and yet no Seal belonged to them in Mr. F's own Sense. And therefore this his unwary Question being rightly taken, is as if he had said, none that are under the Covenant of Grace *SO* as to be justified and saved by it, must be denied Circumcision under the Law, nor Baptism under the Gospel: and then he finds fault with God himself, because he did not allow Circumcision to the Males of *Abraham's* House that died before the eighth day, and because he did not appoint it for his Females, nor for the Infants of the other Patriarchs. If he deny this, then this must be his Sense, That no Infants are under the Covenant of Grace *SO* as to be justified and saved by it, unless they were circumcised under the Law, and baptized under the Gospel. Now tho both these be

great Errors, yet the latter seems to be his Sense rather than the former. Let him say what he will, he has entangled himself in one of these palpable Errors; otherwise let him meet me in the Truth, and confess Infants Salvation neither was, nor is the less certain for their not being circumcised in the Law, nor baptized in the Gospel, and then the Controversy is ended.

And what says he less in his last, than he said in his *Script. Warrant*? These are his words, *Tho there be no such absolute necessity, yet when God institutes any Ordinance, there is a necessity lies upon us to observe his Institution reverently. And I do believe God doth convey Grace by them—God strictly charged this Ordinance to be administred to Infants of eight days old, which could not co-work with him in the Administration of it; then he himself must do it, else the Spiritual Ends could not be attained.* Lo here, does he not tie God himself to Circumcision in the Salvation of Infants? for unless God work by it, he says the *Spiritual* (and formerly he said *saving*) Ends cannot be attained; and unless God work thus in the Administration of Circumcision to Infants, he says in the very next words, *there is only a Sign, but not the Thing signified, so the Ordinance is but in vain*; and Mr. *Firmin* says the same of Infant-Baptism which he speaks of Infant-Circumcision. I think he is not far from the Papists *Opus operatum* in this Discourse.

And here I deny that Circumcision was, or that Baptism is the *Hand of the Spirit* to convey Grace to Infants; I grant indeed, that Baptism, in a true Recipient, signifies our Death to Sin, and ministerially declares our Interest in Christ crucified, to wash away our Sins, and therein we do symbolically put on Christ, to profess his Gospel, and walk in newness of Life. But I do further say, that we are not made Christians by Baptism, but we are baptized in Testimony that we are Christians. Hence our Saviour made Disciples (that is, Christians) before they were baptized, *Repent and be baptized. If thou believest with all thy Heart, thou mayst be baptized.* Who sees not here that the work of Regeneration, is antecedent to the washing of Regeneration? And to conclude this, let me freely speak two things.

First, That God did not institute Circumcision as a thing needful for the Salvation of any Infants; for had it been made needful for Salvation, it would have been instituted for all Infants, they equally having need of Salvation as much as any. But it was appointed for very few Infants, even in *Israel*, in comparison of the whole of that Number: And I do also say, that God never appointed Baptism to

be needful for the Salvation of any Infants, for indeed he never appointed it for any one of them, nor could the wisest that ever managed that Cause, shew an Instance that ever so much as one Infant was baptized in the Apostles days, nor any Divine Warrant to baptize them: And Learned Men of that way say, *There is no Scripture for it.*

Secondly, Though I thus speak, I do not go about to invalidate Sacred Baptism; for I believe, that where the Gospel is preached, and Men have opportunity to be baptized, if then Men shall reject *the Baptism of Repentance for Remission of their Sins*, in so doing they do reject Salvation it self, because they put the Word of Life from them; for though it be not the Cause of Eternal Life, yet it is the Way in which God has promised to give Life; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved*, Mark 16. 16. *But the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized.* And assuredly, had Saul rejected the Gospel in that part of it, when he was so roundly commanded to *arise and be baptized*, Acts 22. 16. he had certainly put the Word of Life from him. And therefore, let Mr. F. and all such as he, consider how they will answer it to Almighty God in their rejecting his Command: Acts 2. 38. *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of your Sins.* Sure this will rise up in Judgment against them, when God shall judg the Secrets of Men according to the Gospel: Nor let them flatter themselves with their Sprinkling, instead of Sacred Baptism; for, therein *they have transgressed the Law of Christ, changed his Ordinance*; and so far at least *they have broken the everlasting, or unalterable Covenant of the Gospel*, Isa. 24. 5.

CHAP. III.

MR. Firmin, pag. 6. sets down the Question in these words; *Whether the greatest part of dying Infants shall be damned?* But here is craft to hide his Opinion, rather than sincere dealing; for he knows the Question set down by me, pag. 5. is, *Whether the greatest, or any part of dying Infants, shall be damned in hellish Torments?*

Now that some part of dying Infants shall be damned in the Judgment of Mr. F. and his Party, yea, and that part is by the sequel of his and their Writings, the greatest part, is very apparent. But he demands, *where he has written any such thing?* Well, Sir, I have shewed you, and shall now shew it you again. In pag. 90. of your *Plea*, where you tie the Salvation of all Infants that shall be saved, to *their having Faith some way, else* (you say) *they must all perish*: And you allow this Faith to no more dying Infants than are elected; and you plainly enough shew, in the same Book, that you do not believe that all dying Infants are elected; no, you do not hold that all the Infants of Believers are elected; and how frequently do you limit the saving Ends of Circumcision to some Infants only; and the same limitation you make of the saving Ends of Infant-Baptism by your *when and where God pleases*, plainly shewing that you do not believe that God did, or does afford the saving Ends of Circumcision, nor of Baptism, to all that were Circumcised in Infancy, or Baptized in Infancy. And if even among the Circumcised Infants, and your Baptized Infants, many may perish, as that is most undeniably your Opinion, (and I think you will not for shame deny it, now you are brought to the *Test*) then it's easy to know this *devouring Monster by the bigness of his Foot*; for then what shall become of the *Millions* of dying Infants of Unbelievers and Idolaters? who were not *Circumcised*, nor are *Rantized*. Sure, according to the Tenour of your Writing, some part, yea, and a great part too of these dying Infants, must needs perish. For,

I doubt you will not be so kind, to say, that all these dying Infants have Faith; and then you plainly tell us they must all perish. And I pray, what means also your bold Assertion, in your last piece, p. 11. where you quote *John 3. 5, 6.* and then tell us, *There is no Heaven for Infants, unless they be born of Water and the Spirit?* Well, Sir, whatever is the meaning of *John 3. 5.* this is evident enough, That unless you believe that all dying Infants are born of Water and the Spirit, according to *John 3. 5.* they shall never come into Heaven in your judgment: Yea, you plainly tell us, *there is no Heaven for them*: And do you not by this cut off all Infants from the beginning to this day, who were not born of Water and the Spirit? Or, will you say, that our Saviour now imposes more upon Infants, as necessary for their Salvation, than ever was yet laid upon them? Pray, Sir, what Infant can you name that was thus born of Water and of the Spirit in Infancy? and if you know none, then you cannot be sure that

that any dying Infant is gone, or shall go to Heaven.

Again, it appears that you do not certainly know what is meant by *being born of Water*, John 3. 5. You say it is a controverted Text; and you say, the *Anabaptists may well understand it of Baptism*, p. 13. and yet, like a staggering Man, you dare not deny Baptismal Water to be there meant; and, sure I am, very Learned Expositors do understand it of Baptismal Water; and by Kingdom of Heaven they understand the Church; and so the sense will be good: for then none but such as give some evidence of the Work of Grace, (and so are like the Wind that bloweth, and the Sound is heard) and also baptized with Water, can enter into the Church-Christian. And if this place be not meant of Baptismal-Water, then you (nor any Body else) can never shew infallibly what is there intended; for if you (as some do) take it for the *Spirit*, as the Spirit is sometime said to be Living-Water, then you make our Lord *tautologize*, to speak of one thing as if it were two; but this is to put an abuse upon our Master Christ.

However, if we allow you your sense, be it this, or that; yet, sure I am, you do not believe that all the Infants of Believers, much less that all the dying Infants in the World, were, or are, born of Water and Spirit, according to John 3. 5. And then you still shut Multitudes of Infants out of Heaven, for by *Kingdom of God*, you will have Heaven to be meant in John 3. 5. Now if you do indeed extend your Charity to all dying Infants, and think them all in a savable state, then leave your wrigling and shifting, and tell the World so, that we may know your Mind plainly. The Truth is, you deal in this case, as the *Quaker* does in his, whose chief Art is to hide his ill Opinions in Ambiguities.

Certainly, this Matter requires the plainest dealing that may be, that poor Christians may see, and others also, what ground there is for the Salvation of their dying Infants. But I seriously protest unto you, Mr. F. that according to your Doctrine, no Christian can be sure, that so much as one dying Infant, from the beginning of the World to this day, was saved; because it is impossible for them to prove that any one Infant was ever born of Water and the Spirit, according to John 3. 5. And if not, then according to your Doctrine, they cannot tell *whether there be any Heaven for any dying Infant in the World*; no not those very Infants which Christ took in his Arms and blessed; for none can prove that they were born of Water and Spirit, according to John 3. 5. so uncertain does Mr. *Firmin* make the Christian Faith concerning Infants.

Thus

Thus, Sir, by God's Providence, you have more nakedly discovered your cruel Opinion concerning dying Infants than formerly; and blessed be God that it is now stripp'd so naked by your self, and by your Partner, who is within our Call: So that now I hope it will be duly lashed by the Lord's faithful Witnessess, even out of the World, as a *murderous*, and God-dishonouring, and Scriptureless Opinion; and that which has indeed caused all our Divisions concerning Sacred Baptism: For when Men got into this Opinion, that none could be saved unless they were born of Water, *i.e.* baptized. Then, and not till then, was Infant-Baptism established by *Anathemas* against those who opposed it, yea, and against all that dared to say, Infants might be saved without it: Thus it was decreed in the *African Council*, to send Men to Hell (as far as they could do it) for speaking Truth, for speaking in God's behalf, who is merciful to the chief of Sinners, and therefore cannot be cruel to poor Infants: And truly, could this Error be rooted out of the Minds of Men, our Controversies about Infant-Baptism would come to an end; for let Men talk what they please, the inward Thought, both of Papists and Protestants, (as they are called) is, that their Infants are born again of Water and the Spirit when they have sprinkled them.

But now mark what follows.

In pag. 9. Mr. F. tells us, *Whether God regenerates all Infants, or the greater, or the lesser part of Infants, I wrote not one word* (saith he); *How should I know what God hath not revealed?* And then what is become of his *Plea for Infants*, or his *Scripture Warrant* either, for baptizing them? He confesses, *If God do not work with the Administration, it is a vanity.* Sure he has now pleaded all Infants uncertain of Salvation, even the lesser part of them, suppose but two or three, yet he is uncertain whether God has regenerated them; and yet if ever he baptized any Infants, in the form prescribed by Law, he said of them individually, they are born of Water and the Spirit. But then he spake he knew not what, by his own Confession; however he condemns him that crossed and sprinkled him, and all that Fraternity, who constantly do speak what is not revealed; and thus goes the Business of Infant-Sprinkling.

So now we have it, *pro confesso*, from Mr. Firmin's Learned Pen, that he is uncertain whether ever any dying Infant was saved. But hold, he says also, *He knows not whether God regenerates all dying Infants*: Why then there is as much hope for them all, as for any of them for ought he knows: Why then is he my Enemy, for being an Advocate

cate for them, against such as condemn so many of them? I may be right in this Matter for ought he knows; let him therefore cease to be my Enemy in this Controversy.

And to gratify him, what I said before, and he mentions p. 10. the same I say now, *That Children polluted by Original Sin, so under condemnation, before they come to Heaven, must be cleansed from these Pollutions, whether Originans, or Originatum, (as he speaks) for I confess both, according to Psal. 51. 5.* Nor am I herein against my own Sect, tho I cannot speak for every particular Person. But now let us hear what some of your Sect have said concerning the Damnation of a very great part, and the Salvation of a very small part of dying Infants.

CHAP. IV.

HERE I could name one of your Sect, who in a great Auditory in London, did from his Pulpit declare, *That Millions of Infants of a Span long are yelling in Hell.* There are living Witnesses to testify this; and let this Diabolical Sentence against poor Infants, be a Witness against your cruel Sect for ever.

And what does Mr. *Firmin* say less in his ridiculous Question, p. 14. where he demands thus; *Are you sure that Christ shed his Blood for every individual Infant intentionally?* And give me leave to answer him in his own way.

I prithee *Giles* how came this Question into thy Crown? Dost thou not hereby suppose, that Christ shed his Blood for some dying Infants for nought? or intending nothing for them thereby? and yet he shed it for them; What strange Whimsy put this Folly into thy Brain? Would any wise Man shed his Blood for any Man, and intend nothing thereby? Yet thus does your unlearned Question reflect dishonour upon our Blessed Saviour.

But perhaps you would have said, *intentionally to save them.* And then I answer, either Christ intended this, or he did not shed his Blood at all *for them*, but *against them*; for either he shed it intentionally to *save dying Infants*, even all of them, or else *to damn some of them*, or else for nothing: the last makes him ridiculous, the second makes him cruel, therefore his Intention of dying for all dying Infants, was to save them. By this the Reader may further see what cruel thoughts Mr. *Firmin* has towards some dying Infants. As for his other Questions, (which would make Infants to be Infants when they are Men)

and other Cavils scattered, with Slanders and Reproaches, up and down his last *Pamphlet*, I shall take no further notice of them at present; but let us hear what Mr. *Whiston* (one of his *Sett*) has said concerning dying Infants.

This Mr. *Whistone*, has lately put forth a Book which he calls, *The right Method for proving Infant-Baptism*. 'Tis pity it came not out sooner, if the Book hold proportion with the *Title*. However, whatever it says for Infant-Baptism, it says little for their Salvation, and a great deal for their Damnation. Let us hear him speak, for he speaks very boldly, and doth not mince the Matter as Mr. *F.* doth.

In p. 46. *I aver* (saith he) *how cruel soever I may be judged by Mr. Grantham*) *that no Unbeliever can, according to any Divine Revelation, have any assured hope, either of their own, or their Childrens Salvation, who die in their Infancy.*

But, good Sir, let us state the Case fairly; The Question is not, What assured Hope an Unbeliever can have of the Salvation of his dying Infants? But, whether there be any Revelation which shews God's Love to such dying Infants, that he will save them? As for the Unbeliever, whilst such, it's little better than silly to ask the Question of him. Now suppose the Case thus, you were once an Unbeliever, and you had some Infants during your unbelieving state, who died in their Infancy. After this you become a Believer; I now demand of you, whether there be any ground on which to hope the Salvation of such your dead Infants? If there be any ground of Hope in this Case, it must either be built upon God's Mercy in giving his Son to die for them, notwithstanding your Unbelief, and then there is the same ground of Hope concerning other Unbelievers dying Infants as well as yours; for it is not peculiar to one Unbeliever, and not to another, because God is no respecter of Persons; and he has shut up all in unbelief, that he might have Mercy upon all, Rom. 11. and then sure he has some Mercy for all the dying Infants of those Unbelievers; and here is a ground of hope for their Salvation, tho the Unbeliever know it not.

If you like not this, then see what must follow; If there be any ground of Hope for such your dead Infants, who died whilst you were an Unbeliever, then it must be built upon your Faith, which you received after they were dead, and upon your now owning a Covenant-Interest for them: But this is to bring in Prayer for the Dead, yea, Justification by the Faith of another for them that are dead, and so to make Christ to have died, or not to have died, for our Infants, as we believe or do not believe. If this be denied, then see the Conclusion, it must be this.

These

These your dead Infants, being born when you were in unbelief, living in Wickedness, one of the chief of Sinners, therefore there is no hope concerning their Salvation; for you did not own a Covenant-Relation for them, but did condemn the Ordinance of God (as you call Infant-sprinkling) therefore they must perish.

And thus at the last you will fly in the Face of God, who hath assured us that the Children shall not die for the Iniquity of the Father; for according to your own Doctrine, had you believed and own'd their Covenant-Interest, they had *infallibly* been saved, it is your own Term for thus you speak.

Pag. 46. *All the Seed of Believers, at least that do own their Childrens Covenant-Interest, and do not out of Contempt to the Ordinance of God, neglect their Baptism, are infallibly saved.* This, as the former, is a very lofty Speech: But I answer:

I doubt your infallible Conclusion here is built upon very fallible Premises; for you here make the Salvation of the dying Infants of your Believers to stand upon the Infallibility of their Parents owning their Covenant-Interest for them; for a fallible owning the Interest will not, I suppose, in your Judgment, produce this infallible Effect. Now then if they chance to fail, and condemn God's Ordinance in the case of Baptism, as perhaps Mr. W. does, for all his heat for Infant-sprinkling, then is the Salvation of their dying Infants made doubtful even by Mr. *Whiston* himself.

O Sir! what is this? Has our wise and gracious God left dying Infants in this dangerous Estate, that they stand or fall eternally with their Parents? What Divine Revelation have you for this? How long shall it be ere your be sure your Believers do sincerely own their Childrens Interest in the Covenant? when perhaps they understand it not, especially as you set it out from *Gen. 17.* and then what well-grounded hope is here, that their dying Infants shall be infallibly saved? O how few do find the strait Gate! And if because the Adult find it not, therefore their Infants must be damned; then wo and alas for poor Infants! it had been good for them they never had been born. And if also their Parents by your means shall be found to have hugg'd a meer human Tradition, even that of sprinkling Infants, instead of (and so condemn) the Baptism of Repentance for remission of Sins, then also is the hope of the Salvation (according to your Doctrine) of their dying Infants made uncertain.

Thus have you led Men into a *Meander* to fright them with a thousand Fears, especially if they be thinking and tender (for the proud Professor will go on without fear) but you have yielded no

solid Comfort at all for them, concerning their dying Infants; nor can you ever prove your lofty Speech to be true in it self, That if Believers come to the pitch you propose, yet it will not follow, that upon that ground the Salvation of their dying Infants is infallibly certain. Let us therefore consider again what ground we have from Divine Revelation (and not Mens confident Dictates) for the Salvation of all dying Infants; and then Believers shall have no need to question the Salvation of theirs, nor to build it upon your sandy Foundation.

Come, Sir, what think you of *Numb. 14. 31, 32. But your little Ones which ye said should be a Prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the Land which ye have despised, but as for you your Carcasses shall fall in the Wilderness.* Now observe, these Rebels stand upon Record for Unbelievers to this day, *Heb. 3. 17, 18, 19.* yea they are noted to be such Unbelievers as did reject the Gospel, *Heb. 4. 1, 2.* and so are propounded as a warning to us. Hence we have a plain Divine Revelation, that the little Ones of Unbelievers, and such too as denied their own and their Childrens Interest in the Covenant, are not therefore condemned with their unbelieving Parents, as you most falsely declare and teach; but they are declaredly under the saving Mercy of the Lord, at least so far as that their Fathers Sin should not damn them, because it should not do them so much as a lesser Mischief.

Let us now consider *Jonah 4. 11.* where our merciful God speaks his Mind concerning Infants of very wicked People. *Should I not spare Nineveh that great City, wherein are more than sixscore thousand Persons that cannot discern between their Right-hand and their Left?* Do you think that God had only this Compassion for the Bodies of these Infants, and none at all for their Souls? Had they died in the Ruin of the City, the loss of all their Lives had not been so much as the loss of one of their Souls to Eternity: sure he who of his Mercy prevented the lesser, would never have inflicted the greater, in case the City, and they with the rest, had died in the Overthrow. Now whether these wicked Parents understood God's Love to their Infants or not; (as it's like they knew little of Eternity) sure I am, God makes not that any Argument either for or against the Preservation of their Infants; no, that proceeds from his own Goodness, Mercy and Pity towards them; and 'tis not found that the great Sinners in *Nineveh* had any further Sense than of the present Danger. Methinks a Christian but meanly enlightned, may see some ground here to believe, that the Infants of Unbelievers are in a far better Condi-

Condition than their wicked Parents; yet your cruel Doctrine makes their Condition the same as to Eternity; yea a Man may see that even these Infants in *Nineveh* are highly in the favour of God, being implicitly declared to be just Persons, in Contradistinction to the Wicked, for as much as God does not impute any Iniquity to any of them. Our Lord speaks of some Persons which needed no Repentance: I can find no Persons in the World of whom that Speech is so true, as of all dying Infants.

Furthermore; let us consider *Ezek. 18. 1, 2, 3, 4.* from hence we may learn, that that is wicked Doctrine, which makes the Infant liable to eternal Death for the Father's Fault; yea, it is a Doctrine to be exploded; God forbids it to be used, even there where the Fathers sinned upon sower Grapes, even Idolatry, by which they ran a whoring from God. *Behold, saith God, all Souls are mine, as the Soul of the Father, so also the Soul of the Son is mine. The Soul that sinneth it shall die, and none else.*

And here by the way, take notice that Men derive not their Souls from their fleshly Parents, but God formeth the Spirit in Man, *Zech. 12. 1.* and therefore from the Immortal God (as his Gift, *Eccles. 12. 7.*) in a way unknown to us, it has its being, *Eccles. 11. 5.* who is therefore rightly called *the Father of Spirits*, and that in distinction from *the Fathers of our Flesh*, *Heb. 12. 9.* yea, he is *the God of the Spirits of all Flesh*, i. e. all our Souls are his, and as their Father, they derive from him, as his Gift, and so *we are his Off-spring*, *Act. 17. 28, 29.* and hence the Soul is immortal, cannot be killed by Men, God only can punish it. And hence we may rationally conceive that the Fathers of our Flesh cannot, shall not, be able to damn them by their Unbelief. No, God will preserve them, if they do not rebel against him, both they and the Bodies in which they dwell, *for the Son shall not die eternally for the Iniquity of the Father*, tho sometimes temporally they may.

Let us conclude with our Saviour's Testimony concerning Infants, *That of such are the Kingdom of God*, and he blessed a part, as a Pledge of the whole, for he does not limit that Speech to exclude so much as one Infant from Heaven, *nor is it the Will of God that one of them should perish*: For that excellent place, *Math. 18. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.* is as truly applicable to all dying Infants, as to any other Person whatsoever. Indeed they, as well as grown Persons, were lost, but blessed be God, *Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost*. So then, this Grace of Salvation, extends it self to all that were lost in *Adam*, and so undeniably to all dying Infants, who never sinned after the simili-

similitude of *Adam's Transgression*, *Rom. 5.* And now we fear not the Dust which *Mr. Whiston* hath raised about his uncertain Infallibility of the Salvation of his Believers Infants. No, no, the Salvation even of those Infants, as well as other dying Infants, is built upon a more sure Foundation than the Fancies and vain Dictates of *Mr. Joseph Whiston.*

CHAP. V.

M*R. Whiston* is pleased to take notice of some part of my *Last and most Friendly Debate concerning Infant-Baptism.* And he labours to uphold this late Invention, *That Circumcision was a Gospel-Ordinance*, which was denied by the Ancients, as I shew in that Book, p. 6, 7. Surely *Mr. Whiston*, and such as he, had they lived in the Apostles days, would have strengthened the Hands of the false Apostles exceedingly; for we do not find that any of them had the confidence, to call Circumcision a Gospel-Ordinance: No, they make it a prime part of the Law, and that which obliged them that received it to keep the whole Law. But a Gospel-Ordinance they durst not call it, tho they labour'd to uphold it in the time of the Gospel, that they might have brought a Carnal Seed into the Christian Church by Infant-Circumcision, as *Mr. Whiston* and his Fraternity does by their Infant-Baptism, for which cause I do not fear to pronounce them *false Apostles.*

Mr. Whiston gives us his definition of a Gospel-Ordinance, *It is (saith he) an Act of Worship instituted in the Covenant of Grace, having an immediate and direct respect thereunto for the Confirmation, obtainnig or conveying the Good therein promised.* And this he must mean, *without Faith* (for that was not required of Infants, nor of the Bond-men, &c. who were to be circumcised) as a necessary Qualification in the Recipient. And then I marvel what Ceremony in the Law, will not pass for a Gospel-Ordinance as well as Circumcision.

And if by Covenant of Grace he means [*not as it was proclaim'd by Christ's Ministry, and confirm'd by the Death the Testator,* for that would spoil him, but] any thing whereby God did fore-shew it, and the People who had some Interest in it, then we must go as far as *Adam*, and bring in the *Sacrifice of Abel*, and the Ark of *Noah*, for these Men were *Heirs of the Righteousness of Faith*, and the Sacrifice, and the Ark, were Seals of their Faith too, as much as *Abraham's Circumcision.* Yea we may, by *Mr. Whiston's* Definition of a Gospel-

Gospel-Ordinance, bring in all the *Propitiatory Sacrifices of the Law*, *Manna*, and *Water in the Wilderness*, (yea, and that with greater shew of Strength from 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. than any thing that can be said for Circumcision) for they prefigur'd Christ as our great Propitiation, and the Food of our Souls. But because this kind of Argumentation proves too much, *it therefore proves nothing*. And this may serve to shew the vanity of Mr. W's Argument, p. 16.

We must therefore seek for a more safe Definition of a Gospel-Ordinance than this of Mr. Whiston's. As therefore he seems not to know my meaning in this case, I will tell him what I mean by the Gospel, and then what I mean by a Gospel-Ordinance. And by the first I mean, *that glorious Ministration which succeeded the Ministration of the Law, and exceeded it in Glory*, according to 2 Cor. 3. or more concisely, 1 Cor. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And by the second I mean, an Ordinance instituted or confirmed by Christ come in the Flesh, to set forth the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and our Justification by actual Faith in him: *This did not Circumcision*.

2. And I further mean, an Ordinance, which ministerially sets all that rightly receive it, at liberty from Circumcision, and the Yoke of Bondage. *This did not Circumcision*. [And how Infants are set free, &c. I have spoken before.]

3. And I further mean an Ordinance, which must continue till Christ's second coming; *But this does not Circumcision*.

And thus I distinguish of Legal and Gospel-Ordinances; The first prefigured Christ to come; the second do evidently set forth Christ Crucified: The first was to vanish as unprofitable, at Christ's coming in the Flesh; the second to continue till Christ shall come from Heaven, without Sin to Salvation. But for Men to take the boldness to intitle an Institution a Gospel-Ordinance, because it was some way a Figure of Christ to come in the Flesh, and to come of *Abraham's Seed* in particular, is an Abuse, and confounds the Gospel-Institutions with Legal-Institutions, which is very pernicious to the Glory and Vertue of the Institutions of the Gospel.

But, come Mr. Whistone, suppose I should give, what I do not grant, and what I am sure you can never prove, yet I will shew you, that in all that you have said to my Book as yet, you have only spoiled your Cause. For, you also assert the *Jewish Passover to be a Gospel-Ordinance*; and therefore you must now make the Jewish Passover to be the *right Method for the proving Infant-Communion*, by parity of Reason, or else Circumcision, though it were a Gospel-Ordinance,

cannot

cannot therefore be the right Method for *proving Infant-Baptism*. So that indeed, instead of avoiding one Error, you have now made Two.

But, Sir, be pleased to consider, that suppose Circumcision a Gospel-Ordinance, yet all Ordinances are to be kept as they were delivered, both for the Substance and Form of them : And it is certain, that the Rules which God prescribed, in both respects, for the Administration of Circumcision and the Passover, differ exceedingly from the Rules which his Word affords for the Administration of Baptism and the Lord's Table, in respect of the Subjects : Infants being undeniably admitted to both the former, but not so much as one Infant admitted to either of the latter. And I profess I can hardly think him an honest Man, who holds Infant-Circumcision necessarily to infer Infant-Baptism ; and yet at the same time stily denies Infants participation of the Passover to infer Infant-Communion, and especially Mr. W. who affirms both Circumcision and the Passover to be Gospel-Ordinances.

Thus much I thought fit to say to Mr. Whiston, to the intent, that if any Man shall chance to think he answered my Arguments, [which I think he has not done with any advantage to his Cause] ; yet, he that so thinks may also see, that indeed he has not gained, but rather lost ground in the Case of Infant-Baptism ; and so far I will confess he has hit upon the right Method of proving Infant-Baptism, for the faster they lose the false Grounds on which they have always builded that Opinion and Practice, the nearer they come to the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of their Sins ; and that indeed is the best Method for *proving Infant-Baptism*.

And this is all that I shall say to Mr. Whiston in this Controversy, unless I have further provocation from him, because I would fain have my late Piece to be (at least on my part) as the Title is, *The Last Debate concerning Infant-Baptism*. Yet before I take my leave of Mr. Whiston, I shall intreat him (as I did Mr. Firmin) seriously to consider, Phil. 3. 4, to 10. where it appears, that *Circumcision* was but a *fleshy Priviledg to St. Paul himself*, and therefore he esteem'd it but *Dung*, which he would never have done if it had been to him a *Seal of the Righteousness of Faith* : a *Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, should not be so lightly esteemed ; a *Seal of the Covenant of Grace*, should not be so meanly characterised : surely he had no such elevated thoughts of Circumcision, as Mr. Firmin and Mr. Whiston seem to have : It was never the *Hand of the Spirit to him, for saving Ends*, and yet it was as much advantage to him as to any other Jew, for he was an Elect Vessel as much as any of them.

And seeing he says, that *as touching the Righteousness which was of the Law, he was blameless* ; it shews his Circumcision was as efficacious to him as to any of the Jews that were under the Law of Circumcision, and yet, behold, it did not interest him in Christ, nor the saving Benefits which come by the Gospel, and therefore was to him *no Gospel-Ordinance* : Which Consideration alone does sufficiently enervate all that Mr. Whiston has said in Answer to my Arguments ; by which I prove that Circumcision was no Gospel-Ordinance, but a Carnal-Ordinance, and a part of the Yoke of Bondage.

And whereas divers of my Brethren are particularly concern'd to take notice of Mr. Whiston's Book, as it respects the *due Subject and Manner of Baptism*, I shall leave it to their discretion what to do in these Cases.

